

Mr. Secretary:

Animal agriculture is facing increasing pressure in the form of environmental regulation and legal action as our growing urban population and expanding retirement communities move into rural areas.

Two major coordinated thrusts are needed to maintain the viability of animal agriculture and rural communities. The first is expanded education of both urban and rural communities that uses science to illustrate both the opportunities and the limitations that must be addressed to find alternative approaches to urban and rural environmental issues.

Second, is expanded use of the innovative alternatives component of EQIP to facilitate rural community and farmer cooperation to meet the challenge of growing urban and retirement community pressures. In the coming years, the Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma quad-state region has the potential to be either the example of cooperative solutions or an environmental battleground. I encourage you to help this region achieve the example solution.

Thank you



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